1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

776 782 rests with the eldest male of the founding lineage of the village, but the whole community usually assists. There may be two guardian spirits in a village, one at the head and one at the tail of the community.

● 754 Witchcraft, poisoning, magical curses, oaths, and ordeals are all present in Atimelang religion, but are undeveloped or unstressed.

778 613 782 769 Sacred hearths of various types (*ara foka*, *ue ara*, *mani ara*, *je ara*, *kuya ara*) belong to lineages and are kept in the lineage house when it exists. They are simply four pieces of wood like those that form the frame of the ordinary household hearths. The sacred hearths should be fed once a year. As food is offered the hearth, the lineage ancestors, in so far as they are known, are named. The sacrifices are usually made in February or March when the new corn crop is about to be harvested. The owner of the hearth should abstain from a varying series [262] of foods prior to the sacrifice.

796 At the season when the hearths are being fed, there are also four minor village ceremonies whose general function is to assure plentiful crops. They are given in the course of two months, February and March, and are in order of performance: Hopuina (spit on it), Yetok (water pours), Bol (strike), and Ading (also called Kuya, both of which are untranslatable). Responsibilities for certain duties in these ceremonies descend in the male line.

784 Connected with some of these ceremonies and with the feeding of certain hearths are quiet, or taboo (*si*), periods, during which vigorous work, shouting, and quarreling may not take place. Any breach requires [688] a gift to the owner of the ceremony by way of atonement. Usually these taboo periods last only one day but the most important of them lasts four days and comes at the end of the dry season just before the men of the Five Villages set out for the one communal hunt of the year. During the 224 hunt, which is primarily for wild pig, large grass fires are set. Men stay at special hunting camps on the edge of uncultivated grasslands while the women remain quietly at leisure in the home village.

769 782 There are also more or less elaborate garden sacrifices to the souls of former cultivators of the site. If the site is a new one, sacrifices are made to the *genius loci*, which has been disturbed. The number and size of the sacrifices depend on whether the garden (*uti*) is a small one frequently used and planted to corn, or a large field (*pining*) at some distance from the village and usually reserved for rice.

765 Death feasts, although largely financial and closely allied with prestige, may also be considered part of the religious ritual, since their ultimate objective is to dismiss the souls of the dead from the vicinity of the village. During the first ten days after death a series of obligations

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

Finally he freed himself and suddenly found that he was seated on the top branches of a mango tree. He climbed down the tree and was discovered by two supernatural women. As in the other two myths, Farik, the father of the women, was reassured as to his intentions and invited him to the village, where he was revived by the usual millet treatment and the use of fire tube and fan. After his marriage to the two women, Momau began to feel homesick and with the help of his father-in-law went back to the surface of the sea and from there to his own village. His two supernatural wives had been transformed into a conch shell horn and a green glass bottle. These he neglected after securing a third wife in his own community.

A wild pig began to root up Momau's sweet potatoes. He went to guard the field and in an attempt to shoot the animal he was disemboweled. (This is presumably a punishment for the neglect of the two sacred objects, his transformed wives.) The villagers all pursued the pig, which escaped by flying into the sea and changing into a porpoise.

Meanwhile his father-in-law, Farik, disguised as a Kebola man, went to Momau's village and miraculously healed him. The following day Farik transformed Momau into a crow and then back again into human form. Thereafter Momau himself possessed the power of healing severed bodies; this he demonstrated on his dog and child. He was also capable of assembling a shattered ax by simply blowing on it. His third wife was alarmed by these powers and said he had become a witch, whom all would avoid. Momau then turned into a crow and flew back to Farik's village taking with him the first two wives in the form of a conch shell horn and a glass bottle.

MALIGNANT SUPERNATURALISM

All this material on Good Beings represents, on the whole, wishful fantasying about a better world and kinder characters, without quite eliminating the uncertainty and harshness of real relationships. Although Good Beings are usually wonderful and enviable, there are categories of supernaturals envisaged with equal specificity who are consistently malignant.

Witches are among the most concretely visualized of such beings. I very much doubt that anyone in Atimelang is considered a witch or practices witchcraft. However, Atimelangers are convinced that certain villages are witch-ridden, and Kewai, their enemy of the last war, is one of them. Men and women both can be witches; most frequently they gain power over people by inviting them to have sexual intercourse. Then, while the person sleeps, the witch steps over the partner's

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

754 body and urinates on him. Thereafter the witch is able to eat out his victim's liver at leisure. Abdominal pains after contact with people in areas known for their witchcraft always suggest the possibility of having been victimized.

Witches also have the power of transforming themselves into civet cats and streaks of light which are seen at night. They can detach their heads and send them rolling about after dark. They eat small children and seem to be associated with cannibalism. At least one informant said, [266] "They used to be the people who ate human beings." Cannibalism is an abhorrent and frightening idea in Alor. Witches also have a predilection [825] for snails—one of the animals, along with snakes and walking sticks (insect), that produce shudders of repulsion in the natives. The term used for witch is *palua berka*. *Palua* is the name of a small and harmless green snake; *berka* means bad or potent.

The only data I could procure about witches was in terms of gossip and rumors, some of which were recent and circumstantial. For example, a man who had died shortly after marrying a woman from Kewai was supposed to be the victim of her witchcraft. Malelaka even professed to have seen a witch once when he went to Kewai to visit his brother-in-law's uncle. As he skirted a bluff above the village spring, he saw the body of a girl leaning against the slope. The head and right arm were detached from the trunk and were floating about separately, looking for snails. Malelaka said that he reported this to his host and that the latter put a special medicine into the spring which would turn a witch into a normal person and protect normal people from witchcraft. A condensed witchcraft tale will probably give most adequately the flavor of local beliefs on the subject.

Tale of Witchcraft

539 Seven people from Murawating went to the village of Faliefa. Murawating and Faliefa were really one village, but there was a fence between the houses of the witches and those of the other people. The seven men reached the boundary. Atapada said, "If we lay aside our weapons, perhaps the people will not plot to kill us." Six of them laid aside their weapons, but Lanata kept his with him.

A young witchwoman came to Lanata, took his weapons, and placed them in her house. That evening she asked him to enter. Lanata was angry, but his six friends said, "Lanata, go up. We speak inepely, so you go." Lanata entered the house, ate the food the woman had prepared, and slept with her that night. In the middle of the night the

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

woman stepped over Lanata and urinated on him, thereby bewitching him.

The next day Lanata's six friends called him. He wished to accompany them, but the woman persuaded him to continue living with her in the village.

In five days the woman suggested that Lanata go pig hunting with his brothers-in-law. Lanata shot an animal which the dogs were pursuing and which proved to be a snake. This happened twice. His brothers-in-law wished to eat the snake, but Lanata refused and instead provided himself with crabs and crayfish from the ravine. The next day he returned to the village with only the remnants of his crabs, whereas his brothers-in-law brought in the snake meat. His wife cooked the meat, but Lanata refused to touch it, saying, "You eat what I should eat. You substitute for my mouth."

After a time the woman was pregnant. She and Lanata set out for his village of Murawating. On the way she turned into a bat and flew to his village while he walked. While they lived in Murawating, a child from Kewai entered their garden. The child saw a green snake sleeping on top of a tuber which was pushing through the earth. The green snake (witch) ate the child's liver, and the child died. The men of Kewai were angry. They encircled Lanata's house and set it afire. Lanata's wife turned into a bat and flew away. Lanata was shot as he tried to escape. As he lay dying his hand closed on Alurkowani's testicles so firmly that it had to be pried open. After that Lanata's soul possessed Alurkowani, and witches multiplied in Kewai so that now all the people there are witches.

The improbability of anecdotes about witchcraft makes me feel that we are dealing here with a complete fantasy structure. The beliefs are couched in terms similar to those used in near-by culture areas. In such clusters of ideas, peoples from other regions have invested a great deal of psychic energy. It is noteworthy that this is not the case in Atimelang, where neither witchcraft, sorcery, nor poisoning bulks large, either as an institution or a preoccupation.

Only two deaths of which I knew gave rise to definite gossip of poisoning. It was, however, very cautiously discussed in undertones and only among friends. It is possible that more such rumors circulated but never reached my ears. However, one man who had not been feeling well for some time talked quite freely with me about the possibility of having been poisoned on a trip to the coast, where he chewed areca with a stranger. It was very difficult to get any concrete data even from

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OFS Alor OFS

754 those willing to discuss the matter. A dead man's tooth powdered into
[52] food or mixed with tobacco is supposed to be deadly. A fly that alights
on such food will die; therefore, finding a dead fly in food offered by
people whose good will one has reason to suspect, arouses suspicions of
an intent to poison. All interest in this field, as in the field of witchcraft,
remains on a remote plane and is stimulated only by some ill fortune. I
feel quite sure there was no general pervasive malaise in this connection.
[52] At a time when Malieni and his brother were absent a good deal visit-
ing a village on the west slope of Kalabahi Bay, people whispered that
they were purchasing poison there. So far as I know, however, the mat-
ter was dropped as a subject of gossip after four or five days.

Witchcraft and poisoning are definitely not major problems and are
only minor causes, among many, of illness and death. There is abso-
lutely no attempt, such as one often finds in sorcery- and witchcraft-rid-
den areas, to conceal nail parings, excreta, and all personal effluvia. On
page 88 there was an account of a woman who thought her husband
had poisoned her by using a piece of areca-nut shell she had tossed
away. In an area really preoccupied with poisoning no woman on bad
terms with her husband and in a strange village would have been so
careless. The interesting aspect of these matters of witchcraft and poi-
soning is that they are present but largely latent.

789 The most frequently used form of malignant activity is the laying
635 of curses. These, as we have already noted, may be directed by one
24 individual against another. It is not done secretly; quite on the contrary,
57 it constitutes a public declaration of hostility where personal relation-
ships have reached the breaking point. More common is the impersonal
use of curses, usually after one has been the victim of theft by an un-
known person. Since there is very little property, except garden pro-
duce, whose owner is not generally known, most such protections against
theft are to be seen in fields, near areca and coconut palms, or near the
place where a child, too small to identify anyone, has been robbed.
Toddlers often wear anklets with a bell or a single-strand cord belt on
which coins or beads have been strung. If these are stolen, and not in-
frequently they are, a curse will be erected by an expert on the trail
where the child usually plays. A common sight in gardens is a bamboo
pole bearing one of a large possible variety of sickness insignia. These
may be erected before one has been victimized, as a warning to a poten-
tial thief, or after one has been victimized, in order that the unknown
thief may develop that particular illness.

635 An instance of such procedure may serve to make matters clearer.
789 Fanemi Long Hair's son, a child of about two, had a coin stolen from

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OFS Alor OFS

159 wife] went to Padaimang of Kewai and said, "One of your young kin gave Maleleka areca nuts, and now he cannot sleep." Then Padaimang came. I took areca, rubbed my stomach with it, and gave it to Padaimang. He sat down beside me and rubbed my stomach, saying to the witch, "You can't stay here." He extracted something and put it in his basket. When I recovered, I gave him ten cents and he left. Then the guardian spirit of the village came to me and said, "Why do you want to eat that areca? They will pull off your head [a common of witches]."

Then another time I went to Kewai to see Alorkopada. His daughter Kolata was fetching water. I looked; her head and right arm disappeared, and her body was leaning against a rock. Blood was not flowing at the stumps but had just collected there. Her head and arm were looking for meat in the taro, and she was eating them. [Snails were a source
[125] of great revulsion.] I went to Alorkopada and said, "Father, when your daughter returns and cooks, I won't eat it, because she was out harvesting something in the taro." He said, "That child does not do right. If one wants to hunt something, one must do it secretly." Then he went to the chief, who gave an order, saying, "Another time you can't do this. Hereafter no young woman may step over a young man, and no young man may step over a young woman [a witch's system of casting a spell]. If that person does, he will go to jail, and we shall be shamed. If you have food that is cold or old, you must not give it to others; eat it yourself. If the person eats and is sick, we shall be shamed." Then two
[126] people from Kewai who were not witches put medicine near the spring.
157 When the witches drank that spring water, they became ordinary people. They put the medicine in a bamboo tube with a hole in the joint, and the water from the spring flowed through the medicine and out the hole. Before this, when their husbands were away, women ate their own children's livers and substituted tuber leaves for them. When their husbands slept they would step over them, and that would make their husbands sleep deeply. Then they would take tuber leaves and put them in place of their husbands' livers. They took out the livers and cooked and ate them. When they did this, they ordered their husbands to go stay with their mothers and fathers. [That is, they ordered
197 them to leave for their own villages so they would not die in Kewai, since this would create suspicion. Note that the informant spoke of witches in female terms, although they were of both sexes. He even acted as though residence were matrilocal, in order to place blame on women.]

[I asked if he remembered any castration threats.] No, but when my

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1946
OFS Alor OFS

November 14, 1938

159 [I suggested that Fantan begin by telling early memories. He was unable to start, so I asked whether he had dreamed the night before. He told the following.] I dreamed that a white woman—either you or the new nonya,* I don't know which it was—went out to the toilet in the back. Maliessi was standing there. He went to the door. We told him the white woman was in there and not to stand there. We were angry with him. He opened the door and looked in. [What brought that to your mind?] When I was very small, someone I don't remember, maybe my father's older brother, hit me. My mother came and made the man stop. The man picked me up and fondled me. Another man with a big sore on the small of his back came and took me from the first man and fondled me. I cried. This was the time there was a war in Atimelang [i.e., in 1918; Fantan must have been about three at the time]. People came to stay at our house. A little girl my age stayed in the house with us at this time. I had a stomach-ache. In getting up to run to urinate I defecated on her head because I couldn't control myself. My mother scolded me and washed the little girl. The feces were in her hair. [Urinating on a person is a device used by witches to get people in their power.]

[160] At that time the men had built a stone enclosure and covered it over with bamboo. It was a sort of fortification, and the men were hidden in there. I did not know about it and went up on the roof of this enclosure to defecate. As I defecated on the men's heads I heard them saying softly, "Uh, uh." Then my father, who was in the fort, took a stick and chased me away.

About this time I remember that I cried in the morning until I was fed. My paternal parallel cousin, Lonmale, was about my age, but she didn't cry. The girl's father poured water on me because I was crying. We two children turned on him and fought him. My sister [cousin] gave me her food to eat.

When I was about six or eight, my father sent me with my mother to fetch a moko from Alurkaumi. Father gave me bird arrows and a back and a side shield of areca bark. I danced challenge as though I were an adult. Alurkaumi gave me the moko, and I beat it as is customary. It was only a short way from Alurkaumi's house to ours, but I beat it ten times while carrying it home. I delivered it to father, and father said,

* This was Miss Nieuhuyzer from the University of Leyden who joined me for three months.

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OFS Also OFS

If it curls around my mouth, I shall die." He blew out the smoke and it 157[4]
rolled out straight ahead. He said, "Now I shall live." But the seer cast
his familiar spirit, and it took father's soul far off, and my father died.
As I was holding my father in my arms I put my hand under his mouth, [157
and a tooth dropped out into my hand. That was a sign that there [158]
would be another death soon, and in a short time mother died.

[How long was it before your mother died?] Mother died a year and a half after my father; it was two years ago. [How?] Pedato the Leper and his wife separated. The wife married a kinsman of ours in Mukongfukong. The Mukongfukong people would not eat the food that the people of Kerieta [Pedato's village] cooked and vice versa. The [157
Kerieta people made magic against Mukongfukong with their vanishing 158]
stone. Mukongfukong made magic against Kerieta with their enduring spirit. Pedato gave a feast and paid my mother for a shroud with a snake and rice. My mother carried them right through to the Mukongfukong people, to our relatives. In Mukongfukong the enduring spirit went into my mother, because she came home and was sick. She defecated blood. Mother was sick for two and a half months. [Which hurt most, your father's or your mother's death?] When mother died I cried for ten days. But I cried for ten days too when my father died. Whenever I went any place alone I would think and then cry a lot. I feel my mother and father were good because they gave birth to me. If they hadn't I wouldn't be here now. I am still here, so I feel I have a debt to pay. They fed me and gave me drink when I was small. I must pay that debt to them. I am raising three pigs now, and the next good year [1940] I shall give a death feast for both of them. That is the debt I must pay. I think and think of my father and mother. They slept together. Father used up all his money. Mother was pregnant and had trouble because of me; people had to watch over her until I was born. I was small but she fed me. When I slept she made me comfortable; she had to clean up my feces. My mother and father went to work and had to come back to fondle me when I cried. Mother had to come back from the fields, from fetching water and firewood. Father would start someplace and I would cry, and he would have to come back to fondle me. When I was hungry they cut bananas for me. My maternal grandparents came bringing things and had to be fed. When I was still bloody [i.e., newly born] my mother had to sit in the house from four to six days with me. My mother had trouble because of me. Death feasts are to pay for all this care. [Fanteu. I felt throughout this speech that Fanteu was saying something rehearsed, or was expressing just a standard